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Our reference: EXM 1243A

Sally Stratnoen, Chief
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Washington DC 20250
USA

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Dear Dr Stratnoen

FSIS AUDIT REPORT 11-19 FEBRUARY 2002

Thank you for your letter of 16 May 2002 enclosing Dr Urban's draft report. We received this on 27 May 2002. Thank you for the opportunity to comment.

Failure of pre-operational sanitation in several areas of establishment 2060
Deficiencies in SSOP records and application regarding preventive action

On 26 March 2002 we wrote to Mr Clark Danford confirming that corrective actions had been taken and that a further inspection had been carried out to confirm that standards were satisfactory.

The SSOP has been reviewed and amended. Written procedures now include remedial action to be taken following the identification of unsatisfactory cleaning. Additional training and improved management have been implemented.

Not testing meat products for arsenic

The UK is not obliged to include arsenic in the surveillance programme undertaken to comply with the requirements contained in Council Directive 96/23/EC. Medicines containing arsenic are not authorised for use in food producing animals anywhere in the EU. This does not mean to say that the UK cannot undertake surveillance arsenic testing but we have no intelligence to suggest possible abuse. Should we receive information suggesting that there may be abuse we will review the position.



Meat products contaminated with grease and faecal matter and the potential of product contamination due to condensation and a leaking water pipe.

As noted in the audit report, immediate corrective action was taken. In plant 2134, a secondary checking regime has been introduced at the head of the cutting lines to correct any contamination found on incoming product.


Establishment 2060 not using a statistical sampling process control for generic e-coli testing

The auditor kindly supplied some basic information and further clarification of criteria employed in the US domestic inspection programme was obtained when two of our officials visited the USA on a study tour. The regime for interpretation of sample results will be adapted to reflect US requirements before exports to the USA recommence.

We look forward to resumption of exports of pigmeat to the USA as soon as our foot and mouth disease freedom is recognised by your authorities.

Kind regards

Yours sincerely



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